

Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

Dear alumni and friends,

This academic year has been one of transition and much excitement. As the new division director, I am learning new things every day and am consistently energized by our cohesive community of dedicated and talented faculty, students, alumni and friends of the Division. We are excited by our new projects such as the renovation of the OT Lab. The room has been transformed into a "maker's space," a place where students and faculty can imagine, create, and construct! Here we can facilitate hands on learning and critical thinking skills. Students have the space to use a 3-D printer to make adaptive equipment, fabricate a splint, or learn to knit! It is through your kind donations that we are able to provide these and other hands-on opportunities for our students.

We are also hard at work tackling new initiatives including planning for the transition to the occupational therapy doctorate, increasing our outreach to under-served populations, and addressing diversity and inclusion within the division and profession. An additional initiative focuses on interprofessional education, research, and practice. In this issue, we highlight some of our efforts. Interprofessional collaboration is essential in ever-changing health care and educational environments. The issues individuals, communities, and populations experience are complex and are best addressed by working collaboratively to achieve optimal outcomes. Therefore, faculty are working closely with others from the Department of Allied Health Sciences, across the University and community partners to provide meaningful interprofessional learning experiences for students, to provide innovative intervention, and to design research studies to address the needs of those we serve.

UNC's legacy of preparing occupational therapists and occupational scientists for innovative practice, teaching, and research continues with these initiatives. Be on the lookout for more information about our initiatives on our new website which will launch soon! And be sure to save the date when we announce the division's 40th anniversary celebration in 2020.

Nancy Bagatell, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA, Division Director



Rural Interprofessional Health Initiative: Student Perspectives



Charley Jo Cross, OTS; Erin Franzen, OTS; Raheleh Tschoepe, MS, OTR/L; Julie Eyster, OTS; Karen Edwards, OTS

The UNC Rural Interprofessional Health Initiative (RIPHI) is a three-year pilot program supported by a \$1.5 million award from the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust. This award provides faculty and programmatic support that

enables UNC health professions students to serve and learn in underserved rural clinic settings in North Carolina. Goals of the project are to inspire a rural health care workforce, to help transform clinical care in underserved areas, and to establish interprofessional clinical experiences in rural areas of North Carolina.

Assistant Professor Raheleh Tschoepe, MS, OTR/L is the occupational therapy Faculty Champion. Meg Zomorodi, PhD, RN, CNL, leads the UNC RIPHI Faculty Champions at each of the UNC Health Affairs Schools. The four students who participated this year are 2018 graduates of the MS program.

Student Perspective:

In the fall of 2017, we took a course about interprofessional population health where interprofessional student teams engaged in case-based learning. This course expanded our ability to engage with other disciplines that may be unfamiliar with OT which in turn taught us more about our roles. This spring, we applied our fall coursework as we conducted quality improvement projects in interprofessional student teams in six health care sites across four North Carolina counties. This experience allowed us to gain a community-based population health perspective and better understand how OT contributes to population health alongside other disciplines. The RIPHI program was a great adjunct to our OT coursework and the takeaways will carry with us beyond this learning experience and into practice.

Virginia Dickie, PhD, OT, FAOTA, 2018 Mitchell Symposium Scholar

Virginia Dickie, PhD, OT, FAOTA, was the honored scholar at the 2018 Mitchell Symposium, an annual event hosted by the Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy. The symposium was established in 2011 in honor and memory of Marlys Mitchell, PhD, the founder of the master's program in OT at UNC. Symposium scholars deliver a public lecture and participate in talks, discussions, and meetings with faculty, students, and researchers. The symposium is made possible through generous gifts from friends and alumni of the division.

Dickie's symposium lecture focused on quilting as an example of theory and practice of occupation. Dickie's background in anthropology led her to conduct an ethnography on quilting as an occupation. Her research found that occupations are situated among social, economic, political, and environmental elements. During the lecture, she used quilting as an example to illustrate how theory and practice are deeply intertwined in the study of occupation and practice of occupational therapy. Dickie likened the act of quilting to studying occupation.



"We don't know or understand occupation very well," Dickie said. "This may be because occupation is so ordinary, something we learn without knowing we're learning it. Occupations are both ordinary and extraordinary, mundane and special, easy-to-learn, and incredibly complex." "It's a great honor to be asked back to UNC to give this lecture," Dickie said. "I knew Marlys Mitchell well before I came to North Carolina through her reputation and leadership roles."

Caroline Harkins McCarty, PhD, OTR/L and postdoctoral research fellow, said Dickie's integration of quilting and occupation was beautifully illustrated. "It highlighted the ways that learning and community can be created through shared engagement in occupation. I particularly appreciated her examples of ways that basic science can expand our perspectives and challenge our assumptions about how occupations are learned."

MS Student Thrives in Interdisciplinary Leadership Training

For the past year I have had the pleasure of being a trainee in the North Carolina Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program at the UNC Center for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (CIDD). This federally funded program is dedicated to providing interdisciplinary leadership training at undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral levels. The training program includes students from a wide array of disciplines including Audiology, Genetic Counseling, Health Policy and Management, Nursing, Nutrition, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Psychology, Social Work, Special Education, and Speech-Language Pathology. The program is designed to encourage family-centered care and therefore includes family member trainees as well as self-advocates.

The LEND program incorporates varied learning experiences, all of which are rooted in interdisciplinary practice and emphasize understanding and cooperation across disciplines. These experiences include clinics at the CIDD, a problem-based learning course that addresses developmental disabilities across the life span, lectures from CIDD staff members, and UNC Maternal and Child Health Leadership Consortium workshops to develop leadership skills.



Megan Venable

I find the most formative aspect of the LEND program is the opportunity to learn alongside students in an array of fields. I observe other disciplines' assessments, engage in open dialogue about the child's strengths and challenges, and collaborate to provide meaningful recommendations to the family. I am constantly surprised by the ways that our disciplines overlap and also have unique ways to address a child's needs. Working alongside the other disciplines has helped me further understand the scope of OT. This experience has been paramount in helping me understand how disciplines can support each other to provide holistic care as well as building my confidence in interdisciplinary collaboration.

Antoine Bailliard Partners to Advance Community Mental Health

Assistant Professor Antoine Bailliard, PhD, OTR/L, is a research fellow for the Community Outcomes Research and Evaluation Center and a consultant and trainer for the Institute for Best Practices within UNC's Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health (CECMH). In this role, Antoine provides technical assistance and trainings to assertive community treatment (ACT) teams across the nation to enhance their capacity to provide independent living skills trainings for community-dwelling adults with serious mental illness. In collaboration with community partners, Antoine is developing two evaluation tools to facilitate a deep and nuanced understanding of ACT consumers' functional independence in activities of daily living. Antoine's goal is twofold -- first and foremost: to optimize the participation and quality of life of adults with serious mental illness, and second: to do so specifically through OT, thereby highlighting the profession's utility in the field of community-based mental health. In his capacity as a research fellow, Antoine has convened a multidisciplinary team (including social work, psychology, rehabilitation counseling) to develop a SAMHSA intervention grant aimed to connect individuals with serious mental illness who are homeless to:

- (1) *stable housing,*
- (2) *psychosocial rehabilitation enhanced with occupational therapy, and*
- (3) *enrollment in mainstream social services.*

Overall, Antoine's work highlights the importance of interprofessional collaboration to address the needs of adults with serious mental illness in the community.



Students Participate in Interprofessional Learning Experience

On January 25 and February 1, more than 230 students and faculty from nine different health care disciplines at UNC gathered for an initiative targeting interprofessional teamwork and case-based learning. This was funded in part by the Bureau of Health Professions (BHP), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) "Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program." A group of interprofessional faculty, including Professor Sue Coppola, OTD, OT/L, FAOTA, have implemented this program since 2000. Bringing together the fields of occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing, social work, pharmacy, dentistry, dental hygiene,

speech-language pathology, medicine, and nutrition, students were offered tangible examples of their professors and mentors collaborating over the case of older adults who could benefit from their collective input and treatment. Students were subsequently divided into smaller interdisciplinary teams to discuss the case studies. Due to the need for 21st century health care teams to think and act collaboratively, UNC-CH faculty see this as a crucial step toward equipping students with these practical skills to augment their deep knowledge base in their respective disciplines. The experience gave students an "appreciation for the complexity of care involved in treating older adults and the need for interprofessional communication and collaboration," according to Palmyra Romero, class of 2018. Just as Harry Truman famously mused: "Imagine how much we could get done if we didn't care who got the credit," this project aims to equip students with the wisdom to coordinate, refer and sometimes defer to colleagues when it is in the best interest of the older adult. By doing so, the goal of clinically excellent, insightful, creative client care can be achieved in our generation.



MS Students Bring Interdisciplinary Backgrounds to Our Program

Our peer-learning approach draws upon the diverse life experiences, educational, and work backgrounds of our students. Here are some examples:

Anna Benfield, MS, Class of 2019: As a Women's Studies major, I was trained to use many sources of knowledge to understand how intersecting identities and experiences impact individuals and communities. This training has helped me better understand the transactional nature of occupational engagement."

Leslie Riley, MS, Class of 2018: "Because of my music background, I see how expressing yourself through art can be a spiritual practice."

Lara Corsbie, MS, Class of 2018: "Studying English literature in my undergraduate career has led me to see peoples' lives as a story arc. As an occupational therapist, we enter a client's narrative and seek to understand her/him as the protagonist in her/his own story. Narrative structure helps me comprehend my own role as a minor character in someone else's narrative, which helps me focus on the client."

Dave Clatterbuck, MS, Class of 2019: "At its core, engineering is about finding practical solutions to real-world problems, and although the nature of the problems addressed are different, OT's also apply a systematic process to create practical solutions that help people interact with their environment and participate in meaningful occupations. My PhD in engineering and previous work experiences have also lead me to approach OT with a critical eye and seek out evidence rather than accepting ideas at face value."

Dana McDowell, MS, Class of 2019: Human Development and Family Studies "(HDFS) informed my learning by highlighting the important role of cognitive, social, and emotional stages of human development across the lifespan. With this background, I entered OT with an appreciation for human relationships, family dynamics and its significant impact on daily life."

Orange County Department on Aging Partnership Engages Faculty, Alumni, Students



Through a grant awarded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, the Orange County Department on Aging (OCDOA) has championed an initiative called "Orange County CARES" which stands for "Caregiver Awareness Respite Education and Support." Professor Jenny Womack was the co-author of the grant, along with Dr. Mary Fraser, director of the Aging Transitions team at OCDOA, and serves as the project coordinator. Over the past three years, a team of social workers and occupational therapists have provided education, training, caregiver respite services, in-home consultations, support groups and dementia friendly business training, all of which are free of charge to residents of Orange County, NC over 60 years old, their care partners and related service providers. By offering such services, this talented multidisciplinary team hopes to create and sustain conditions wherein individuals with dementia and their care providers are respectfully supported and the community at large is educated and integrated into a sustainable solution. doctoral student Ryan LaValley is a member of this dynamic team as is UNC MSOT alumna Marie Dagger. Marie Dagger, MSOT class of 2015, took advantage of a long work commute to consider ways in which she could better support her own family as they learned to live with Alzheimer's Disease. Instead,

an announcement on the radio station about a new grant-funded initiative gave her a different option to respond to the needs of families. That announcement led Marie to apply for a full-time position with the OC CARES team, a specialty team serving families living with dementia. In this role, Marie has provided training to over 75 businesses in a Dementia Friendly Business initiative, as well as dozens of families and direct care workers through other education sessions. Although training is her primary role, Marie also supports the caregiver respite program and provides direct services in the home to families who deal with challenging behaviors due to dementia. Kudos to this scholar and change agent!

Recent Faculty Publication Highlights

Womack, J. L., Lilja, M., & Isaksson, G. (2017). Crossing a Line: A narrative of risk-taking by older women serving as caregivers. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 41, 60-66.

"Crossing a Line" is the third in a set of four studies about older adult caregivers. Repeat interviews with three women serving as caregivers to spouses, a sibling and a friend led to a poetic narrative of their stories of not feeling heard or having their expertise respected by health care providers, a situation that leads them to take risks in order to meet the needs of their care situations.

Bailliard, A. L., Carroll, A., & Dallman, A. R. (2017). The inescapable corporeality of occupation: Integrating Merleau-Ponty into the study of occupation. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 1-12.

This theoretical article provides a focused description of Merleau-Ponty's philosophy and its relevance to occupational science. The article emphasizes the role of the body in everyday occupational experiences and how sensory perception is an active process that is embodied through social processes.

Bagatell, N., Chan, D., Rauch, K. K., & Thorpe, D. (2017). "Thrust into adulthood": Transition experiences of young adults with cerebral palsy. *Disability and Health Journal*, 10(1), 80-86

This paper reports findings from an interdisciplinary study funded by the Gabriella E. Molnar Transitional Care Research Grant (Foundation for Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation). Through focus groups, young adults with cerebral palsy reported feeling thrust into adulthood, overwhelmed by having to navigate systems to obtain services, coping with unanticipated changes in their bodies, and dealing with stereotypes and stigma. Findings highlight the need for a holistic approach to transition with a focus on building capacity and empowerment.

Coppola, S., Miao, A. F., Allmendinger, C., & Zhang, W. (2017). Art in occupational therapy education: An Exploratory Mixed-Methods Study of an Arts-Based Module. *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*.

MS OT students' enthusiasm about arts-based learning inspired this mixed-methods study. We found that an arts-based module produced significant changes in the students' perception of the benefits of art in OT curricula. Students' expressed many benefits of the module, including perspective shifting, tapping into emotion, offering exemplars of therapeutic encounters, and "out of the box" thinking.

Watson, L. R., Crais, E. R., Baranek, G. T., Turner-Brown, L., Sideris, J., Wakeford, L., ... & Nowell, S. W. (2017). Parent-mediated intervention for one-Year-olds screened as at-risk for Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 47(11), 3520-3540.

This publication reports the results of a study investigating the efficacy of a parent-mediated early intervention called Adapted Responsive Teaching (ART) with 87 one-year-olds identified by community screening. We found minimal evidence for main (direct) effects of ART on child outcomes. However, ART group parents showed significantly greater increases in responsiveness to their infants than did control group parents, and there were significant indirect (mediation) effects of group (ART vs. control) on multiple child outcomes through changes in parent responsiveness. This supported our theory of change.

PhD Program Alumni Updates

Anne Kirby, PhD, OTR/L, (Class of 2015) of the University of Utah, for "Pilot Study of the MAPPS (Maximizing Adolescent Post-Secondary Success) Intervention." Mentor: Himle Michael, PhD.

Lauren Little, PhD, OTR/L, (Class of 2012) of Rush University for "Bridging a Service Gap in Autism: A Hybrid Education-Coaching Intervention" Mentor: Winifred Dunn, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA.

Khalilah Robinson Johnson, PhD, OTR/L is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Virginia Commonwealth University at the iCubed transdisciplinary center devoted to diversity and inclusion. She has recently been appointed as coordinator of advocacy and policy for the Developmental Disabilities Special Interest Section.

Heather Fritz, PhD, OTR/L Assistant Professor at Wayne State University recently received a grant through the Michigan Health Endowment Fund to evaluate the feasibility and to determine preliminary outcomes of an occupational therapy based frailty prevention program around community-dwelling, pre-frail African Americans.



Anne Kirby and Lauren Little at the AOTA Conference

Update Your Information on the Alumni Directory

We love staying in touch with our occupational therapy and occupational science alumni!

In order to stay in contact, please update your information with the University's General Alumni Association (GAA).

Follow these three steps:

- 1) Email alumni@unc.edu to update your University record.
- 2) Updates can include your name, mailing address, email address, phone number, etc. In your email, please include your full name and class year.
- 3) To provide the GAA with a more detailed update of your information, visit:

<http://go.unc.edu/j3YFd>



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